

Recruitment Pack

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service



September 2023



Making Cumbria a safer place for all

cumbriafire.gov.uk



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Thank you for your interest in starting or developing your career with Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

As the newly appointed Chief Fire Officer for CFRS, my vision for the service is clear: we are looking for professional, talented, and community-focused individuals to make Cumbria a safer place for all.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is an excellent place to work. You will be joining a diverse and inclusive service that is dedicated to supporting and developing our workforce and ensuring all of our communities receive the level of service they need.

It is a really exciting time to join Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, the recent change in governance has created a real opportunity for us as a service to modernise and ensure we continue our journey and are fit for the future.

A clear, supportive and fair recruitment process is crucial to ensure we get the right people into our service, and develop them to meet their full potential, and I am looking forward to welcoming new future Fire professionals to our service.



Rick Ogden
Chief Fire Officer
Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service



Our Recruitment Processes

It has never been a more exciting time to consider your future with Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

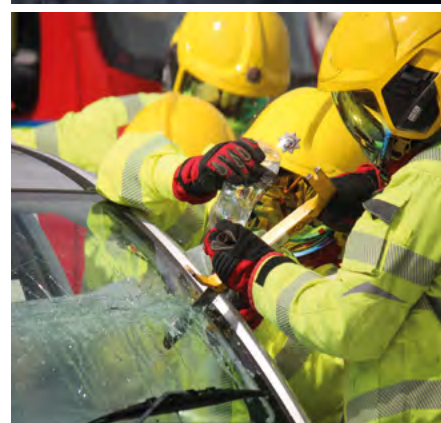
Our service is passionate about the communities we serve and dedicated to developing our workforce - if you're looking to progress in an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic fire service, we are the right service for you.

Following a significant period of change, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service are at the beginning of our journey as we have moved from the governance of the County Council and to the Police, Fire, and Crime Commissioner. This exciting opportunity brings with it the chance to innovate, integrate, and do things differently, and one key focus is ensuring our Selection and Promotion processes are fair, inclusive, and allow all candidates to be their best selves on the day.

As a service, we have begun to introduce some measures that aim to reduce unconscious bias, remove barriers, maintain standards, and modernise how we recruit. This is on-going work and we will continually monitor changes made, seek feedback from all involved in the process, and review in line with national approaches.

Some of the changes we have made in 2023 so far are:

- ▶ For all interview panel assessments, candidates are given the interview questions 10 minutes beforehand to read, process, and collect their thoughts, allowing them to come into the interview ready to answer as effectively as possible. It is a good example of positive action as research has shown that it's particularly beneficial for individuals who are neurodiverse. However, given there are individuals who aren't aware they are neurodiverse we have made this adjustment for all candidates. Feedback for this has been overwhelmingly positive, with both candidates and panel members sharing that the interview has a more relaxed feel, and the candidates are able to present the best version of themselves.
- ▶ We have made significant changes to our application form, clearly indicating which sections are confidential and won't be shared with the shortlisting panel, and which sections will, with the aim to reduce unconscious bias at the shortlisting panel.



- ▶ We have expanded the section on our application form where candidates can begin the conversation around reasonable adjustments, enabling the Resourcing and Talent team to have the initial conversation with the candidate (if successful to the next stages) and seeking consent on whether this is shared with the assessors or panel members.
- ▶ We are committing to include virtual engagement sessions and Familiarisation Days in all of our processes where possible, enabling potential candidates to get to know the service in a friendly and informal way, and to share key information on the process, as well as allowing candidates to ask questions directly to people working in CFRS and living in Cumbria.

At a time of ongoing reform of public services, it has never been more important to ensure we have the right people in the right roles, and successful applicants joining CFRS will be entering an engaging and empowering environment, building on our existing open and inclusive culture to seek continual improvement in performance across the Service. We are dedicated to improving outcomes for communities and driving our services forward to be the very best they can be.

Our Assessment Methods

We utilise a wide range of assessment methods to enable recruiting managers and panel members make confident and thorough decisions, and for candidates make the most of the experience and support their development.

Some of our assessment methods are:

- ▶ Interview panels, including Staff and Stakeholder panels
- ▶ Discussion exercises, both individual with a panel or group
- ▶ Skill based assessments, such as writing a briefing, delivering a presentation, analysing data and presenting trends
- ▶ Drill Exercises
- ▶ Practical Assessments
- ▶ Psychometric Testing
- ▶ Assessment Centres.

Assessment methods will always be made clear on the advert, in the recruitment pack where relevant, and shared at any virtual or in-person engagement sessions/days.

If you have any questions about our assessment methods, please contact: recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk



Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We value the diversity of our employees and aim to recruit a workforce which reflects our communities in Cumbria. We actively encourage applications from all suitably qualified individuals, irrespective of people's age, disability, gender, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or other personal circumstances.

We have guidance in place to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and consistently at every stage of the recruitment process, including the consideration of reasonable adjustments.

Some of our inclusive recruitment actions are:

- ▶ Offering flexible working where possible
- ▶ Placing job adverts across a number of jobs boards, especially on Women in the Fire Services' jobs board
- ▶ Providing candidates with clear expectations, timelines, and communications throughout all processes
- ▶ Removing employment history from the application form
- ▶ Encouraging supportive discussion and implementation of reasonable adjustments
- ▶ Using skill-based assessment tasks where relevant
- ▶ Collecting and analysing EDI data to inform inclusion outcomes.

Positive Action

As a service, we are dedicated to considering to reducing under-representation where identified and supporting individuals with protected characteristics.

At the beginning of recruitment processes, we work to identify any under-representation in the role; consider support for those who have different needs; and recognise disadvantages for those with protected characteristics. We also utilise, where possible, workforce data to identify barriers and under-representation.

We then work to ensure that Positive Action is in place to meet the needs of any of the identified individuals. Positive Action will be in place as long as the relevant conditions for that recruitment process apply, and the impact of any positive action measures will be monitored and progress towards the aim will be reviewed.

If you have any queries about Positive Action, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Resourcing and Talent team, on recruitment@cumbriafire.gov.uk

Key Definitions

Equality

Equality ensures that every individual has equal opportunities, regardless of their background, identity or experience.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the representation and recognition of people with different characteristics. In the UK, it is against the law to discriminate against someone with a 'protected characteristic'. These include:

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Gender reassignment
- ▶ Marriage and civil partnership
- ▶ Pregnancy and maternity
- ▶ Race
- ▶ Religion or belief
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Sexual orientation.

In addition to protected characteristics, we aim to consider diversity of other characteristics, such as socioeconomic background, as well as considering intersectionality, wherein people may have multiple, overlapping identities that can impact their experiences.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about going beyond representation and recognition, to valuing these differences and enabling everyone to thrive at work.

We strive to have an inclusive workplace, where people feel they can perform to their full potential, and that they belong in the organisation without needing to conform or mask their identities

These key definitions have been supported by information on [CIPD.org](https://www.cipd.org).

About Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is a large rural service covering the picturesque Lake District to the Pennines in the east and from the industrialised West Cumbrian coast to the estuaries in the south of the county. Cumbria is the second largest County in England and is the second least densely populated, with a population just under 500,000, 52% of those live in rural areas.

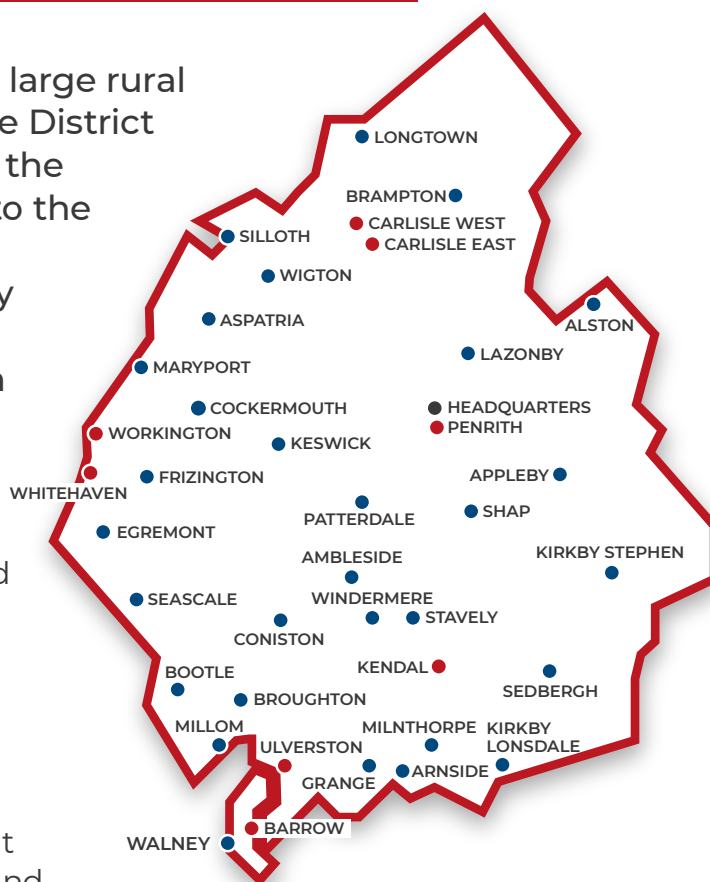
CFRS have approximately 650 firefighters and fire service staff. Cumbria is supported by 38 fire stations. We have 8 wholtime stations and 30 on-call fire stations.

The mountains and lakes attract millions of visitors each year. In 2021, 31 million people visited Cumbria. This significantly increases risk across the county throughout the year and increases our response demand.

Cumbria has sites of significant national risk, including Sellafield and BAE Systems in arrow. The county hosts large scale events attracting thousands of visitors such as Appleby Horse Fair and Kendal Calling. CFRS are heavily involved in the strategic safety planning of these sites and annual events.

Cumbria also has infrastructure challenges, because we have the country's fourth largest road network with 7,900km of roads. From the M6 to busy urban streets in built up areas and narrow country roads in remote rural areas. There are 3,729km of unclassified roads, many of which are winding with steep gradients and poor accessibility, so the Service have a diverse fleet of vehicles to meet our challenging geography.

CFRS places particular focus on education for young drivers, delivering Road Awareness for young people aged 18-25 regularly. Courses aim to raise awareness of the dangers on the roads and effects of road traffic collisions. The Service also delivers many Call, Push, Rescue courses, teaching emergency life support skills to members of the public.



Key

- = Wholtime/Day Crew and Wholtime/Day Crew with On-call
- = On-call

CFRS have a team of Fire Protection Inspectors who audit medium and high-risk premises, and our shift-based firefighters inspect low risk premises. Our Fire protection activities are wide ranging and through effective collaboration the Service focus on the most vulnerable to harm.

Cumbria is no stranger to severe weather, Over the past 15 years, the county has experienced significant flooding events. Storm Desmond in December 2015 caused unprecedented damage and destruction throughout the county. The 'Beast from the East' and Storm Arwen left many homes and villages cut off for days.

CFRS have specialist resources and training to deal with wildfires, water rescue, flooding and firefighters are also trained for large animal rescues and have rescued cows, horses, sheep, dogs as well as wild animals.

CFRS focus on Prevention, Protection and Response to keep communities and visitors safe every day, every year.

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service is led by a newly shaped Strategic Leadership Team, made from both Operational and Corporate services, that combines industry knowledge, proven excellence in their fields, and a passionate commitment to continually drive the service forward.



Our Vision and Values

Our vision

A community-focussed, professional, and trusted Fire and Rescue Service that makes Cumbria a safer place for all.

Our values

We believe passionately in the delivery of excellent public services to make Cumbria a safer place for all. To do that we need to be clear about the values and behaviours that we need to drive change and achieve our high standards.



Putting our communities first



Dignity and respect



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Integrity



Leadership

► Putting our communities first

We put the interest of the public, the community, and service users first.

► Dignity and respect

We treat people with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

► Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We continually recognise and promote the value of equality, diversity, and inclusion, both within the fire and rescue service and the wider communities in which we serve.

► Integrity

We act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.

► Leadership

We are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.

Living in/Relocating to Cumbria

As a place to live, Cumbria takes some beating. Its home to some of England's highest mountains, biggest lakes and most breath-taking scenery. The scenic views are matched by the openness of its communities and the friendliness of its people.

From the stunning beauty of the Lake District to the lively and bustling market towns and the rich history, Cumbria offers something for everyone. This unique piece of England inspires a lasting affection among residents and visitors alike. But there is more to Cumbria than meets the eye. What brings people here and keeps them coming back is, quite simply, the unbeatable quality of life.

Time and again the county comes top of the league in surveys looking at Britain's best places to live. With excellent schools, low crime, good house prices and big opportunities for those who choose to live and work here.

If you are considering relocating here, there are a few things you should know:

- ▶ Cumbria's schools consistently achieve above national average results in a range of areas and the percentage of children who gain access to their first preference schools are amongst the best in the country.
- ▶ Cumbria has some of the lowest crime rates in England
- ▶ It has an amazing outdoor offer.
- ▶ Its GP practices have the country's highest levels of patient satisfaction.



Connectivity to and from Cumbria is excellent:

Train: Cumbria has excellent mainline rail links, opening up access to Newcastle, Leeds, Glasgow and London.

Road: Cumbria is linked to the rest of the country by the M6, to Scotland via the M74/75 and to Newcastle upon Tyne by the A69.

If you are travelling further afield, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and Newcastle are located less than 90 minutes' drive from the county.

This is only a brief glimpse of what Cumbria is all about, of what it's like to live and work here. To get a real taste of this beautiful, interesting and exciting county, you'll really have to come and experience it for yourself.

For more information, please visit:

- ▶ Cumbria Tourism www.cumbriatourism.org
- ▶ Information and statistics about Cumbria www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk
- ▶ Visit Cumbria www.visitcumbria.com
- ▶ The Lake District www.golakes.co.uk
- ▶ Doing Business in Cumbria www.cumbriachamber.co.uk

Key Documents

Please note, these are document versions we have now, and some are currently under review.

Annual Performance Report – 2019/2020

Click [here](#) to view the report.

Annual Report – 2021/22

Click [here](#) to view the report.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

On 20 January 2023 we received the report from our most recent HMI inspection (tranche 3), the third set of reports. Our Service was assessed against the following areas:

- ▶ How effective they are in keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks;
- ▶ How efficient they are in keeping safe and secure from fire and other risks; and
- ▶ How well they look after their people.

Click [here](#) to view the report.

Community Risk Management Plan – 23/24

Our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2023-24 was published April 2023 as a 1-year extension to our current IRMP. Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service has been through significant change over the past 12 months, as we move from working with Cumbria County Council to the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner. We understand the uncertainty this change in governance has caused, and this CRMP allows our service to be clear about what we want to deliver over the next 12 months.

Agreement of this document allows CFRS to put in place a comprehensive process to develop a new CRMP for 2024-2027. This new CRMP will allow CFRS to consider the latest available intelligence to ensure that innovative solutions are put in place to address our People, Prevention, Protection, and Response arrangements.

Click [here](#) to view the plan.

IRMP – 2019 – 2023

This is our existing Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2019-2023, and a significant consideration was the change in Governance the service has gone through in the past 12 months.

This IRMP, envisioned in line with the County Council's Council Plan, set out the priorities for the Council in collaboration with CFRS, stating that it wants to enable communities to live safely and to shape services locally. Part of this is ensuring an effective fire and rescue service, targeted at vulnerable people and areas of highest risk.

Click [here](#) to view the plan.

Service Plan – 22/23

Our Service Plan for 2022-23 was produced knowing the significant change Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service were undertaking in this period, specifically moving to a new Governance model under the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Local Government Reorganisation, that saw the County Council cease to exist and a review of corporate functions required. The Strategic Leadership team worked to ensure minimal impact on operational delivery and are striving to further this as we move through the next 12 months and consider our future Service Plan.

Equality and Diversity Strategy

This strategy outlines our approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. It summarises a significant number of documents produced at a national level that provide guidance to Fire and Rescue Services with regards to EDI, whilst also recognising at the time of publication that the service was part of County Council (CCC) and ensured collaboration with the Council's broader Equality Framework.

EDI is of the utmost importance in both our outward facing service delivery activities and inward facing responsibilities as an employer. This Strategy will provide the foundation for the Service to deliver against the aspirations within the Local Government Association's (LGA) Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework (revised 2017). In doing so, the Strategy recognises that the EDI agenda is not static. We will ensure that the Strategy is regularly reviewed, and members of staff are held to account for the delivery of actions.

Click [here](#) to view the strategy.

Our Governance

Peter McCall is the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria following the transfer of responsibility for Cumbria Fire & Rescue Services governance to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner from 1 April 2023.

For more information, please click [here](#).

Our Code of Ethics



Putting our communities first



Dignity and respect



Equality, diversity and inclusion



Integrity



Leadership



@cumbriafire



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